

1937

First the Blade



*For the earth bringeth forth fruit
of herself; first the blade, then
the ear, after that the full corn in
the ear.*

St. Mark 4:28



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First the Blade



VOLUME X

MOUNT SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Publishing for
THE CALIFORNIA INTERCOLLEGIATE FELLOWSHIP
OF CREATIVE ART

1937

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Los Angeles, California*

FOREWORD

THE FIRST CONFERENCES concerning the publishing of student verse in an annual volume took place during 1927-1928. Three conferences were held at Fullerton, and delegates from Whittier College, Santa Rosa Junior College, Pomona Junior College, Long Beach Junior College, Santa Ana Junior College, Glendale Junior College, the University of Redlands, and Pasadena Junior College joined in discussion with the members of the Fullerton Junior College English Club, in formulating plans.

Volume I of *First the Blade, an Intercollegiate Anthology of Student Verse*, appeared in June, 1928. The editor-in-chief was Mildred Jean Stewart, then a student at Whittier College. Poems from Santa Rosa Junior College, Whittier College, Sacramento Junior College, La Verne College, Occidental College, the University of Redlands, and Fullerton Junior College were included in this book of forty pages. A small edition of one hundred and fifty copies was printed by the Fullerton Junior College Press. So completely was this edition—a "first edition"—sold out, that Volume I is definitely a collector's item.

Dr. Lawrence Emerson Nelson, poet, and chairman of the English Department, University of Redlands, early began to attend conferences and to take an active part in planning the new work. Consequently, during the year 1928-29, he supervised the publication of Volume II under the editorship of U. of R. chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, national English fraternity. Thirty-three institutions of higher learning in California submitted over four hundred and fifty contributions from the pens of one hundred and forty-one writers. The number of copies published was also increased, and after the appearance of Volume II, it was evident that the Intercollegiate Fellowship of Creative Art was a going concern.

A conference was held Saturday, May 11, 1929, at the University of Redlands and attended by faculty and student supporters of the Fellowship. At this time the constitution of the organization was adopted,—a constitution which, more in the breach than the observance, is technically still in operation, except for slight amendments.

Carrol A. Montague was student editor-in-chief of Volume II. The book contained verse from twenty-nine colleges and universities of California, and demonstrated genuine powers of discrimination on the part of all concerned. The volume contained sixty-two pages.

Professor William S. Ament, now President of Claremont Colleges, was on the campus the day of the conference just mentioned, and he readily undertook, as Chairman of the Faculties at Scripps College, the supervision of the publication of Volume III for 1930. No records of the conference held at Scripps College in the spring of 1930 are at hand. But a foreword in Volume III records that the English Club at Scripps, with Caroline Bennett as editor and Professor William S. Ament as faculty adviser, read some five hundred poems submitted by one hundred and fifty-seven students of thirty-five institutions of collegiate rank in the state. An attempt was made, as in previous years, to choose "only the best." Volume III contained eighty-two pages.

Dr. Tempe E. Allison, Dean of Women, San Bernardino Union Junior College, and William Robert Miller, student editor, were leaders in the publication of Volume IV, which was distributed at the spring conference at San Bernardino, May 16, 1931. The growth of interest in *First the Blade* was shown in the submission of nearly one thousand poems by students throughout California. Volume IV contained eighty-six pages.

Two institutions offered to publish Volume V at the San Bernardino conference,—Pasadena Junior College and Pomona Junior College. The lot fell to Pasadena.

Minutes of the San Bernardino conference also show that eleven colleges were represented at the 1931 conference,—Redlands, U.C.L.A., U.S.C., Pomona, Pomona Junior, Compton Junior, Holmby College, Pasadena Junior, Fullerton Junior, L.A.J.C., and San Bernardino Union Junior College.

Mr. Murray G. Hill, head of the English department, Pasadena Junior College, had been identified with the work from the beginning. Through his cooperation, in 1932 Miss Harriet L. McClay as faculty adviser, assisted by Jean Louise Backus, as student editor, and David Brockton Brown, as business manager, published Volume V, a book of ninety-four pages. The editorial task was augmented greatly through the appearance on the editorial desk of fifteen hundred poems by two hundred and thirty-six contributors, from forty-five institutions of collegiate rank.

In 1933 San Diego State College, through the leadership of Gamma Psi, honorary literary society, published Volume VI. The editor, Rachel Harris Campbell, poet and winner of prizes in previous volumes, was assisted by Elizabeth Louise Kilbourne. Faculty adviser was Spencer Lee Rogers, faculty member of Gamma Psi. He says in the foreword of Volume VI: "In the opinion of those who have had the pleasure of watching the volume grow into being, the task of handling six hundred poems from one hundred and thirty contributors, representing thirty-two colleges has been executed with order and fairness." Volume VI was a sumptuous publication of seventy-eight pages.

Volume VII, published by Los Angeles Junior College, was edited by George Papermaster and George Ramsay with Joseph E. Johnson of the English faculty advising. A unique method of judging poems was introduced: three California poets served as jury. They were Hildegard Flanner, Helen Hoyt, and Maurice Lesemann. Over

seven hundred poems were submitted to them from one hundred and fifty student contributors, representing twenty-eight colleges and universities. The Three Arts Club was directly in charge of publishing this book of eighty-one pages.

A firm friend of the Fellowship from its inception is Thomas H. Glenn, Head of the English Department, Santa Ana Junior College. Volume VIII, 1935, appeared in May as the result of his leadership. Physically Volume VIII was the most ambitious and successful of this lengthening shelf. The Tavern Tatlers, the Santa Ana literary society, served as editors, and through the enthusiastic efforts of Thomas E. Williams, director of the College Fine Arts Press, were able to produce a master-piece of printing. Four hundred copies of this book were published. Thirty-six collegiate institutions are represented in Volume VIII.

At the very beginning of the history of the Fellowship, Miss Genevieve G. Mott, Head of the English Department, Santa Rosa Junior College, demonstrated her interest by sending a conference delegate to Fullerton. Under her advisership Volume IX, for 1936 was produced. Forty colleges submitted poems, and over fifteen hundred manuscripts were received by the editor, Harrison Smith. In commenting on the verse submitted to this contest, Professor E. O. James, of Mills College, chairman of the judges, said:

“Not many of the poems sent to us were trivial. I felt in most of these poems an emotional eagerness and sincerity. Often indeed the intent was better than the execution. Sometimes emotional excitement became a bit incoherent; often a fine intent, well written in the main, was marred by an awkward line or an infelicitous image. Could I have the chance to advise any of these young writers, I would urge them to cultivate the patience to revise their work more. Pour a poem out like hot lava—

yes; but acquire also the mastery to replace a word, to iron out a dull or awkward line the next day or the next week. First inspiration and speed; then patient revision."

Space does not permit the mention by name of the great company of students, judges, and teachers, and donors of prizes who have served *First the Blade* and the I.F. C.A. during these ten years. Their work is a votive offering to the aspiration—latent and expressed—which flames in the souls of our California youth. In their poems we hear, like Walt Whitman, "America singing."

Fullerton, California
November 25, 1936

RICHARD WARNER BORST



THIS tenth fruition of *First the Blade* marks a signal achievement in the forward march of collegiate verse. If from its inception this plant had not been tended by able hands, skilled in the task of cultivating untried ground, it would have long since faded into the oblivion of brave little publications which died because of a lack of discrimination in their leaders.

First the Blade, in having passed this milestone, has proven itself a sturdy plant with its roots well down. Mount Saint Mary's College feels itself honored to have the privilege of editing this volume which marks the coming of age of so worthy an enterprise.

The Parnassians, the literary society of Mount Saint Mary's College, express sincere appreciation to Mr. Richard Warner Borst who contributed the history of the first nine years of *First the Blade*. His article serves as a foreword to this tenth volume. We are also indebted to those who gave so generously of their time and talents in the judging of the many poems submitted by thirty-one California collegiate institutions.

ELIZABETH ANN JOYCE

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Blind Farmer

by W. W. Burt, *Occidental College*

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The Wolf and the Fool
by Kathryn W. Daly, *University of California, Berkeley*

*The prize poems are printed first in the book,
in the following order:*

1. THE VIGIL LIGHT
2. MASTER OF SEA AND SKY
3. WIVES OF HENRY THE EIGHTH
4. BLIND FARMER
5. ODE
6. ODE TO MEMORIAL DAY
7. BILLY THE KID RIDES SOUTH
8. THE WOLF AND THE FOOL

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FIRST THE BLADE

¶ THE VIGIL LIGHT

The sanctuary light burns in its wine-red cup.

Casting a golden halo on the chapel ceiling.

Oh, God,

Make my devotion burn constant in the blood-red cup
of my heart.

Let it keep eternal vigilance before Your presence.

Let it never die; let the flame leap higher with each new
devotion

Until it casts a small warm circle of love

On the ceiling of heaven.

ANNA JANE MARSHALL

¶ THE MASTER OF SEA AND SKY

No house of God nor sermon within

Can breach the space 'twixt heart and soul.

Nor wayside shrine nor chapel dimmed

Make easy the path to the heavenly goal.

But love of Him whose hand has wrought

The velvet petals of the rose;

The songs of birds as morning dawns;

The hush of eve'n in lulled repose;

The silver streak 'cross rippled sea,

Caressing the sun's rays stream;

The smell of clover freshly sweet;

The radiance of setting sun;

The icy wonder of snow and sleet;

These are the things that He has giv'n

To prove to man His place on High;

He is the King of earth and Heav'n

He is the Master of sea and sky.

FRANCES BUCHER

¶ WIVES OF HENRY THE VIII

(*To Cornelia Otis Skinner*)

I—ARAGONAISE

In frowning English hall and vaulted court
She wanders, dreaming, picturing again
The swaying sails of galleons of Spain,
Low lapping waters of a Spanish port.
The time for memories is always short;
She bears the brown-eyed English heir with pain;
It is a Spanish child, each throbbing vein
Holding red blood of southern town and fort.
The lonely Catharine takes her daughter's hand;
Two strangers stand alone with troubled mind,
And hearts grow fierce, as dim dreams struggle on
Away from fog-realms to an old warm land,
Across dry valleys and far fields to find
The shepherds and the flocks of Aragon.

II—FLOWER OF FRANCE

The muddy Thames flowed slowly at the tower
Upon the death day of the famous Anne,
When cynics say she waved a little fan,
And laughed at death, defiant, in its hour.
They say that she remembered every flower
That she had thrown, the face of every man,
As catching each small fragrant bloom he ran
To bow to her, acknowledging her power.
The cynics say she thought these things, and seemed
To greet her executioner with ease.
But poets say there could have been a chance
That Anne, in that death hour, might have dreamed
Of inland ridges, singing poplar trees,
And sharp waves breaking on the coast of France!

III—WHITE BIRD

Her fearful agony was England's gain;
Two other queens with hating hearts had tried
To bear the prince; each time the court would hide
Its longing for the boy some day to reign.
No one in London Town could ease her pain;
The news was bitter when the young queen died,
And softly through the English countryside
The House of Seymour mourns its little Jane.
She was the fairest thing among the living;
Like a short-lasting reverie she flashed
Across the hearts of England but to die—
As all life's fairest dreams must die—in giving
What England wanted most; this longing dashed
A white bird from a cloudless summer sky.

IV—LITTLE DUTCH GIRL

Anne came to court, fresh from the country loam,
With open wonder on her round red face;
All childish awkwardness that was half grace,
And eyes as gray as drifting ocean foam.
Dressed in the best court satins, she would roam
The muddy garden paths, dragging her lace,
And longing for Dutch fields, the fragrant place!
Disgusted then, Fat Henry sent her home.
She would not pay the solemn court its dues;
Liking the rustling of fine silks, it's true,
But liking more the rustling of Dutch leaves,
And homesick for the click of wooden shoes,
And yellow tulips shining in the dew—
A village mistress, little Anne of Cleves.

V—LADY DRESSED IN SCARLET

The lady dressed in scarlet held her head
Above all others; Katheryn filled the air
With perfumed presence, and she did not care
To be subdued, advised, or wisely led.
She was the heart of every group; the red
Of sunsets matched her plumes, and she would dare
As queen to turn men's hearts; the court laid bare
Her loves, and unrelenting struck her dead.
The lady dressed in scarlet, mute and still
Lies in the Tower, chestnut hair still curled
On severed head, as in a poet's dream;
And, as though living, Howard seems to fill
With her magnetic self the English world,
That in strained ears still hears her last wild scream.

VI—THE WIFE

She had no burning, secret loves to mar
Her queenship; unemotional she came,
Older than the others, into fame,
A sturdy veteran, wise Katharine Parr.
She had no startling beauty and was far
From being tender, trait that graced the name
Of Jane; she did not sparkle as the flame
Of Howard, or like Anne glow as a star.
She was an honest, unassuming wife;
Though she had married England's king, she kept
Within the lavish court a simple pride.
This honesty had been her plan of life;
And though false friends around her falsely wept,
She knitted calmly while the fat king died.

KATHRYN W. DALY

¶ BLIND FARMER

I felt the room grow stuffy
with her presence.

Her movements near me,
with the slow precision
of her nightly routine,
fatigued my dragging thoughts
as if once more I stumbled
in the furrow of the plow,
adjusting it fiercely
to the bucking earth
in shame at my resentment,
and convulsing my grip
upon the smooth-worn handles
to balance my ingratitude.

She waited for my mood to pass,
before her—"Coming, Jud? It's late,"
as if in harness, at the fence, she paused
for me to turn the plow.

My pipe sucked out,
and in a moment I had strode ahead
across the unfurrowed years.

The desert would but armor her
against elapse of time.
Its pungent soil would strengthen
and enrich the deep-seated stamen
of her bloom,
while its hot wind would hollow out
erosion in the cliffs
of my ambition.

I escaped her in the hall.
The stairs awoke.
The back porch door
barked at my heels.
I fumbled out across the sand and sage
to bleed my nostrils
on the cooled and tempered steel
of twilight desert air.

And yet emotion in me seemed in depth
as false as was the endlessness
of wasteland
bounded by the hills beyond.

The smooth-worn handles
burned within my palms.
I shuddered as from cold.

Asthmatic breathings
rattled from an aching sky.
The thick organic stench of death
from putrifying bones
held and cauterized my throat.

The quietness,
soft and vibrant as a candle flame,
was of a sudden
drawn into the windy draft
of some coyote's howl.

The silence scattered
to the little pieces of the stars
that tuned themselves in disarray
as if the sky's vast orchestra
were testing out its notes.

Heat lightning flared
a crash of brass.
A falling star descended
its discordant pitch.
A drift of clouds moved slowly
like a curtain being drawn.
The wind stirred with the expectation
that whispers across an audience.

Then, in a crescendo
of pale soprano light,
the white moon
filled the empty darkness of the world
with drenching volume.

My senses flooded,
like the voice of an outworn singer
who in the seclusion of his thoughts
hurls aloft an aria
to the listening people of his mind.

I held in swaying balance
that last sustaining modulation
and turned back
towards the house,
the smell of hay and cattle,
the stairs, the room,
and her.

W. W. BURT

¶ ODE

O God, I have wasted another blue day—
Shiny and clean, all its silver and blue
Have slipped through my fingers and gone far away
Lord, I have wasted another blue day—
Young and untouched, it has gone back to you.

I have done nothing in all this blue day—
Nothing of value and nothing that's true—
But lie in the sunlight and walk in the wind—
No good and no evil—I wish I had sinned
And so had a reason for talking to you—
But I have done nothing in all this blue day.

When I give a present, I'd rather it broke
Than be set on a shelf and left hidden away.
You, God, I suppose, are like all other folk,
And are angry with me for not using my day.
O Lord, I admit it. In this I have sinned—
That its golden and green—that its silver and blue
Have slipped through my fingers and gone back to you,

While I lay in the sunlight and walked in the wind—
While I, like a fool, went and walked in the wind.

LOUISA POPHAM

¶ ODE ON MEMORIAL DAY

This day we scatter flowers, this day we dedicate
From all the days, to heroes' memories
Our love and honour, hoping it will please
Those who are living, and those who passed the final gate
Of death, that this, their land, might live.
With smiles upon their lips they went to war.
Carving Pygmalion-like the hearts they bore
So gallantly, and now we give
Our thanks that, like Pygmalion's statue, those
 brave hearts
So carved into an image of a land
Both fair and free, were brought to life by God's
 great arts;
The country which they carved, that noble band,
Now scatters flowers about on graves to every hand.

O land of liberty, of turbulent, brave-eyed folk,
It is most fit that thou should'st consecrate
One day to these brave dead and living great,
Who fought and gave their lives to keep thee from
 the yoke
Of foreign tyranny; and yet,
Tho' "taps" are played this day, and, sadly slow,
Some few with stricken eyes walk to and fro,
The most rejoice, for they forget,
In spite of flower-strewn graves and speeches, that
 the cost
Of war continues after victory
Has dulled the sorrow; and all that thou, my land,
 hast lost
Remains unheard, because the rhapsody
Of victory-crowned peace is being played to thee.

Since time began, tho' men knew well the cost of war,
For petty greed, or hate, or glory's charms
Great kings have forced their subjects into arms
And sent them off to die; each army learned, before
The fight was won or lost, that pride
And dancing banners were but opiates
Which deadened men, and sent them to their fates
Unknowing that the awful tide
Of war sweeps over armies, leaving them but shells
Of hosts, begrimed with blood, disease, and dirt,
And sweeps them back at last, those that still live,
 from hells
Of death with naught but memories that hurt,—
Perhaps a crown of leaves about their brows begirt.

War takes the bloody nourishment the nations bring
And swallows it, as Cyclops greedily
Devoured the men of that great argosy
Which sought but peace; the pendulum of fate must
swing

From songs of war to bitter tears.

When shocks of arms and battle-din subside
And cold dark dusk comes like a wind-swept tide,
Though every battle through the years
Has had this dusk, yet never then has there been heard
A voice that spoke of "honour" or of "hate";
The only sounds, when aught but scavengers have stirred,
Have been the moans of wounded and the prate
Of broken-hearted women, sobbing desolate.

When men returned from war, in all those ancient days,
They sought, as they do now, to vindicate
Their deeds by talk of "glory," to inflate
Their sons' young minds with tales of "honour" and
of praise.

As they do now, these sons would go
With smiling lips when brazen trumpets blared;
Their sires kept silence still, as they prepared
Each his own sword and shield and bow.
When catapults were changed to cannon, spears to guns,
Then men were equalized, but still they keep
The age-old plan of war; that those selected ones
Who fight are best and bravest; thus the heap
Of sacrifice before Wargods is never cheap.

We scatter flowers today upon the tombs of part
Of this heaped, bloody mountain-peak of men
Who died in war through ages past. Again
The thrill of victory and peace runs through my heart,
O land of mine, but dedicate,
I pray, not all that heart to joy in peace;
Let it resolve that thoughts of war must cease,
That never wilt thou consecrate
Again thy bravest as a sop for Mars' great thirst.
These men are dead; the banners that they bore
Lie in proud state or on the battle-fields they cursed—
Forget them not, but vow that nevermore
Shalt thou be ravished of thy sons by fruitless war.

WILLIAM BELL

¶ BILLY THE KID RIDES SOUTH

Bill Bonney trapped in a 'dobe hut
With neither food nor drink,
Declared, "I'd like to leave here, but
They'd shoot me in a wink.

"The posse fills the hills behind;
The canyon drops ahead;
Whichever way I make the break
I'm just as good as dead.

"My horse roams close beside the hut
With bridle, rein and bit;
If he could span them canyon walls,
The southbound trail I'd hit."

From east to west he watched the sun,
Each hour slowly passed,
Until the hills shut out its rays;
The time was near at last.

Then through the dusty cottonwoods
The moon shed down its light;
Bill Bonney loosed his guns a bit
And pulled his belt up tight.

He ground his smoke beneath his heel
And crouched close to the floor;
Then quietly he threw the bolt
And slipped out through the door.

His horse grazed near, beside the hut,
Fed, rested, primed to run;
Young Billy dropped against the earth
And pulled himself a gun.

He crawled to reach his waiting horse
And mounting, whispered "Pard,
It's up to you to span them walls."
Then drove his spurs in hard.

The iron hoofs gnawed the silver dust
And broke into a run;
Bill knew he had to make the leap
Or else his life was done.

Far down below the canyon rims
The rock-bound river lashed;
With scarcely twenty yards ahead,
The valiant partners dashed.

Hoarse shouts rang out among the hills;
The Kid bent to his ride;
His cayuse flew the crumbling brink
And hit the other side.

Bill Bonney crouched against his horse
Amid the bullets rain,
Then waved his hat and smiled a smile
And headed south again.

ROBERT COUDY

¶ THE WOLF AND THE FOOL

(A Tale of a Siberian Village)

The wolves come down to our village
And howl around the door,
And when they come, the children run
And will not play any more.

They once had one to comfort them,
To hold their hands and sing;
The children called him glorious,
A hero and a king.

He would sing above the howling
A song so fierce and wild,
And though his face was ugly,
His heart was the heart of a child.

But the grown-ups called him brutish,
They feared his fang-like teeth,
They called his song "wolf's howling,"
They said he was "wolf underneath."

They said next time a Wolf came down,
They'd give it living prey,
They'd feed the Wolf with human meat
So that it would not stay.

And so when next the Wolf came down,
They drove the Fool away,
Outside into the winter night,
And they thought they heard him say:

“Oh, I’ve got a strange sort of fear, Wolf,
A fear that I can’t explain,
That I belong with you, Wolf,
That you’ll take me back again,
Back to the bleak, cold forest,
Back to the gray wolf’s den—
Oh, let me die an outcast here,
Forsaken by all men—
For I’ve got a strange sort of fear, Wolf,
A fear that is not of death,
A fear that you’ll take me back with you,
That I’m a wolf underneath.
Oh, kill me here and now, Wolf,
Oh, kill me, if you can,
And end my strange sort of fear, Wolf,
The fear that I’m not a man.”

Next day they found what was left there,
A Fool, driven out by men,
But death had stilled his terror,
The fear of the gray Wolf’s den.

The Wolf had killed and eaten
Outside a cabin door,
But the gray Wolf’s prey who had prayed to die
Had been given his wish and more.

He died a fool and an outcast,
Hated and scourged by men,
But God took his soul to heaven
Away from the gray Wolf’s den.

God lifted up to heaven
This soul that welcomed death,
For the Fool that sang for children
Could not be a wolf underneath.

The wolves still come to our village
And howl around our door,
And when they come, the children run
And won't play any more.

But the grown-ups shrink in terror,
With faces pale and gray;
While through the howling of the wolves
The Fool still seems to say:

“Oh, I've got a strange sort of fear, Wolf,
A fear that is not of death,
A fear that you'll take me back with you,
That I'm a wolf underneath.
Oh, kill me here and now Wolf,
Oh, kill me, if you can,
And kill my strange sort of fear, Wolf,
The fear that I'm not a man.”

KATHRYN W. DALY

¶ DANA POINT

The mountain in the dark, masses on the headland,
Taking stance against the sea and rising at the ecstasy
Of the shaking stars . . .
Rolling down hillward to the plains, likewise to the sea
Where the blind white waves forever stumble in the
dark . . .
Thrusting the ebony of night-time's green to the sky.

FRANKLIN PATTERSON

¶ FOR MY MOTHER

Why does my mother weep in the night?
Are the sheaves in her field too scarce for gathering,
And the season too late for another sowing?

From fertile fields to the south
The wind crosses the skies,
Bringing chaff from her neighbors' winnowing
To sting her eyes.

I cannot stop her crying through the dusk;
I cannot explain Thy ways of wind and rain,
Nor know Thy reason for the drought of years
That dried the earth and seared her grain.

I cannot still the hurt
For all my love and longing—
Oh, God, may she rest in Thy arms tonight?
May she sleep with the tears in her eyes,
And they be gone by morning?

ANNE E. YOUNG

¶ IN A CHINESE GARDEN

The shadows cast
In silhouette
The dwarf pine tree
The moon-shaped bridge
The thin bamboo.

But it cast
No shadow
On the Lotus bud
In bloom!

OLGA PAULA ALMAZOFF

¶ LULLABY

Papoose, swaying in the wind,
Mother will be coming soon,
Hush thy sighing, little bird,
Peaceful rests the blue lagoon.

Father is an Indian brave,
Fighting foe beyond the wood
To save his tribe and family too—
Fighting as all warriors should.

Mother is working the whole night through,
Working in the tall, tall corn,
Meal and bread she'll make of it,
When she comes tomorrow morn.

Sleep babe, in your blanket warm,
Close your eyes and dream of day.
Dream that Mother rocks your bed,
Night will too soon pass away.

IDA VINCENT

¶ AT TWILIGHT

Its day being done, a soul has embarked
Upon the uncharted seas,
Guided by stars, to the unknown shore
Borne by the heavenly breeze.

The strife is over, and life is done,
(And now he'll sin—never!)
Life's challenge was met, and the battle won;
Joy and peace forever!

MASAO EKIMOTO

¶ SENILE DEMENTIA

As records on an ancient gramophone
Whose coils while new may take another song,
But when the spiral grooves have been there long
Are more impregnable than flinty stone;
The cylinder once hardened now is prone
To take no new impressions—whether strong
Or weak is negligible—these belong
To the fresh imprint and to it alone.

So is it with the facile human brain
Which time congeals; the old and senile man,
To years and generations wholly blind,
Is still a youth and at his prime again;
And at his oldest never older than
The last thin etching on his brittle mind.

EVELYN ENGLE

¶ PRAYER

Oh Lord,
Let my feet dance to gay tunes;
Let stars stir in singing trees
And make music
For my feet.
Let my voice sing happy songs
To drift through summer forests
Toward the blue sea.

Oh Lord,
Let my eyes see sweet unclouded pictures
Which delight.
Let hyacinths at my touch bloom white.

VIRGINIA ESTERLY

¶ OF THEE I SING

Of Thee I sing as of the stars and sky
As of the multicolored symphony
Of rainbow arched above a calming sea,
As visions that reach up to Heaven; I
Sing still of Thee when ecstasy, perched high,
Smiles down in glowing radiance on me,
As when some grotesque Caliban is free
To chide me with his melancholy cry.

No rare ethereal beauty, sanguine strife
Can alter tune or lyric of my song
Nor can a single word or note belong
To lesser deities. Thou canst suffice
To give to earth a tinge of Paradise;
Of Thee I sing, Thou are my song of life.

RAMON ARMSTRONG

¶ A TRANSLATION OF "A CRISTO CRUCIFICADO"

The Heaven Thou hast promised does not move
My heart to love Thee, God, nor does the fear
Of Hell prevent me from offending here,
On my terrestrial way, Thy tender love.
Above these hopes and fears, they sound, above
Such power as would move the soul, I hear
Thy insults, driven nails that wound Thee. Near
To Heaven am I moved. Thou dying Dove,
Though there might be no Heaven, I should still
Be moved to worship Thee, and though I knew
No fear of Hell, nor hope of a reward,
Though every dream or hope be lost, and ill
Encompass me about, I should be true,
And Thou alone, Thou God of all, adored.

RAMON ARMSTRONG

¶ WISTERIA

In the warm sun the wisteria lay
 Decking with mauve the old walls of grey,
Weaving bright patterns with checkered light
 On fallen petals of blue and white.

VERNA BRYDON

¶ STAR RISING IN THE EAST

I like to think that star,
 Hanging so precariously,
 So low, against the East,
 Was hung there just for me;

To think that, when this earth
 Was but a blazing nebulae
 And life a vague potentiality,
 God hung that star against the sky

Because He knew—after aeons—
 I, lonely and afraid, would see
 Its steadfast flame burn high
 And know He would remember me.

JEANETTE M. ALLEN

¶ DARK WINGS

The night sighs,
 Rustling its dark wings,
 The stars weep softly, their tears
 Dew in silver dust of moonlight.

RUTH E. ALLEN

¶ LIFE

From the bus window what do I see?

Houses—ugly, barren, squalid; with dirty yelling children and yelping dogs.

Houses—small, neat, pretty; with sprinklers sparkling on the green lawns.

Houses—large, sprawling, prosperous; with tall, aged trees and late, autumn flowers.

From the bus window what do I see?

Vineyards—straggling, dried up, hiding their neglect behind ripe pomegranite trees.

Vineyards—well-kept, with late afternoon sunshine smiling on their green and yellowed leaves.

From the bus window what do I see?

Automobiles—scratched, carefree, rattling along.

Automobiles—new, sleek, a whirl of shiny metal flying past.

From the bus window what do I see?

People—gay, students, boys, and girls, with books hunched to their sides.

Children riding bicycles recklessly on the streets and sidewalks.

Tramps—shaggy, ragged, tired-looking, shuffling along the highway.

From the bus window what do I see?

I see life—ugly, beautiful, real.

WINIFRED AHLSTROM

¶ HOUSE-BREAKER

"I know, now, all the clever little wiles
You used, to break into my house before.
The falsely spoken words, deceitful smiles . . .
So now, oh fickle one, I bar the door
With heavy rods of anguish-tempered steel,
And draw the casement shades, before one star
Can flash an eye at me in mute appeal
To let you in again. Stay where you are,
You, Love, with drooping wings and downward glance,
And air of humble penitence, I'm through!
In vain, you plead for still another chance
To break my heart . . .", I said; and turning to
 The hearth, saw there . . . (ah, should I smile or weep?)
 A rueful, smudgy, gold-winged chimney-sweep!

BESS PORTER ADAMS

¶ SONNET

There is no end of Beauty, and no death
When her white arms spread moonlight on the sea;
No hand that reaches towards eternity
Can for a moment even stop her breath.
Save hermit blossoms not forsworn to death
(That absent Spring leaves in the memory),
Or when the bowed wind tunes the aspen tree—
There is no word for Beauty's shibboleth!

Take, lute, all golden sound! Lute, stretch your song
On alabaster! Drape the Parian stones
With music's measured rhapsody! the least
And best and all of Beauty's tenant throng
Brandish the dust of their voluptuous bones
When ageless Lesbos sings them to the feast!

WALDO WINGER

¶ KITES

Green kites and red kites
In a world of blue
Acting so superior
Just as if they knew
They were up near God—
Much nearer Him than you.

JANET EASTMAN

¶ TO THE HILLS

Behind me are the hills
Now dim and shadowed in twilight.
Hills that held me bound throughout
The long warm day, urging me to
Their peaks that softly blurred out
Other hills, more distant and blue.
High on their slopes I found their
Treasures of small winds and
Glimpses of broad valleys warm
In the late sun.
With slow step, I leave the hills.
Swiftly they withdraw,
Along with the low-swung stars.

ELEANOR WALTER

¶ ADVENTURERS

Ah, pilot, swing the wheel about!
—Off the ruled line!
Would you fly forever the charted course?
Come! Swing it off, and I will shout
To those below—We've had a change!
Go to the windows now and see!
And who would tremble in his seat?

EDGAR EWING

¶ COSMIC CATARACT

Snow storms through red rays of sun
Dry leaves fly in confused chaos
They that take the sword, shall perish

Dead matter fills the spheric ether
And perfumes space with rotting fern
Dust thou art

Dark night stole all color from debris
And froze to frost each fribble foliage
To dust thou wilt return

Wind surged through spheres of ruined space
And loudly laughed at lifeless aeons . . .
Upon the sand a house was built

* * * * *

Then space read upon the slate of sky
The message smoked by soaring zephyr
Great signs shall there be from heaven

Dawn's smile flashed light into seance
And clouds gave birth to crystal rain
I am the light, I am the life

From tear mist dew each petal lived
Reincarnated from ash to form
Except a man be born again

Flowers flow through electric mist
Carried by winds to myriad worlds
Peace I leave unto you

The lightning bowed in last farewell
And framed in sun a caloric cross
Lo, I am with you alway

The blinding light made worlds confused
Each blooming vine turned questing eyes
Toward glaring fire and nescient felt . . .
From Infinite came rays of warmth
And faith was known as blood of life . . .
Receive thy sight
Thy faith hath saved thee

HARRIETT WILEY

¶ THE STAIN

Set the eagle free, man!
Loose him!
I cringe to see his pain
In that cage. Who can
Bear to hem his world with iron?
Black sin! to hem his world so;
And blacker still
To show his soul the stain
That smears our own—
A mania for bars.
Loose him, I say. Let him go!
This rugged son of freedom,
This mountain by a hill,
This crag among the stars!

EDGAR EWING

¶ ODE TO ERATO

Descend, O muse! O rarest Erato!
Pause a time in thy sweet Hippocrenic
Pastimes, tripping quickly in the scenic
Glades of sacred Helicon. Return below
From thy prolonged sojourn—as fraught of woe
For us as joy for thee—at that fair fountain
Gushing from the Neptune-ordered blow
Of Pegasus on the proudly swelling mountain.
Deign, O muse, to wreath once more a human brow!

O thou most graceful, charming fair of nine,
Dispatch upon this dread voyage no nymphic
Messenger, no Oread; but in triumphic
Passage, wing with steadfast swiftness thine
Own untried Hesperian way, and divine
Forever render this occidental shore.
And taunt not with thy thirst-whetting shadow—shine
With unadulterated radiance, or,
Stern Muse, remain perverse in thy Boeotian shrine.
Ah, myrtle-crowned, wouldst thou—wouldst thou,
 guide
My inept hand to sweep the heavenly lyre,
Too long unstrung or harshly plucked, with higher
Strains of harmony than ever sighed
From Western harp before?—But I have tried,
I know, thy mercy vainly. “Impertinent
Beggar of a prosaic day, thou pride
Puffed pleader for immortal accomplishment,
Shame!” Thus my outraged reason justly cried.

And I, O Muse, submit. I cannot cope
With reason's onslaughts. I admit my crass
Presumption, blush ashamed to view my glass.
And yet—however vain, I fondly ope
The pregnant stores of various fancy. My scope
Is boundless and my dreams unbounded. Then hear,
Contemptuous muse, mounting thy sunny slope,
This the boastful prayer from one sincere
Who would, but cannot be, the *sad singer of lost hope*.

L'ENVOI

Hear, indulgent Erato, pray hear,
And pray forgive, this foolish song.—Nay, stop
Tight thine ears: give nothing, sweet severe,
Or all, to me, the would-be *sad singer of lost hope*.

GEORGE P. ELLIOTT

¶ I AM JUDAS

Black and silver in thirty pieces—
Garden of shadows heavy with
Tears of night.

In hazy skies of coming dawn—
Three crosses stood heavy with
Flesh and blood.

Knees ground in filth and silver—
Bleating, soulless, saneless
Empty eyes.

Weary feet plodding blood drenched earth—
Hated, hating—
"I am Judas."

BETTY GRAY BOWLING

¶ A FOOTHILL SCENE

I

I saw the glowing sweep of grain
In the arms of surrounding hills;
I paused and gazed at the vigorous, still
Color of the core, letting it's warmth sink in and in,
Deeper and deeper into my being,
Until I could feel the joy and the pulsing
Of the grain in its own story.

II

My eyes caressed the golden brown
And traveled slowly upward
Along the silent, swooping line
Of the rising ground. One solitary tree,
Its deep hue made dull
By the soft, tufty couch that lay round about it,
Stood alone and shrank its leaves
Close to the mother branches,

III

As if it would give them light and life
From the russet thatch below.
Again I looked at the beauty, saw
The hush and the calm of the yellow,
The peace of the brown, and the shine
Of the red, and the life of the golden.
Again I watched the shrinking tree
Drawing light from the field.

IV

And I thought of life and the shrinking weak
And the glowing, warming strong.

FRANCES WAS

¶ ROADS

One road leads out to the country side;
One road goes by on its way to town;
And always, as long as the sun is guide,
The feet that love them go up and down.
After the evening star's white light
Has lured from the hills or the lighted town,
There are other feet all through the night
Following dreams up and down.

FRED BAYLESS

Died March 6, 1937.

¶ RAMON

Few sounds I've ever heard have rung so clear
Through all the years of life
As one old woman's feeble voice.
I heard it through the jungle in the night,
When we were fighting on the island of Luzon,
And still I hear that weary voice
That called so pleadingly, "Ramon!"

For I had seen him on the day before,
When he was lying dead upon the ground;
A bullet from a white man's gun
Had drilled him through.
And all the lonely night time, far and near,
A gentle voice, a pleading voice
Called out the name "Ramon, Ramon, Ramon!"

I heard it in the distance, as she wandered far away,
And growing yet more anguished as the night wore on;
And still I hear it as I heard it then—
A woman's voice that called, "Ramon, Ramon, Ramon!"

ELBERT STEWART

¶ BEAUTY GAVE ME ALL

Sufficient now is beauty to my need,
Emotionless as rock and pure as flame.
The tide of ecstasy beyond all creed,
Beating the mind to thoughts without a name,
Has turned to ebb, as flowing dreams must cease,
And silence whispering through my life now heeds
The calm; the quiet mind has learned its peace
At last, the ardent heart no longer bleeds.

For seeing branches bright across the sun
I do not weep for distant dreams and small;
Though nothing wait of all that I have won,
Beyond the last dark hill, the ultimate wall;
Though now my pride and pain and joy be done—
When I had nothing beauty gave me all.

MARTHA WICKHAM

¶ I AM PENELOPE

Helen's face is delicate and rich,
But I am plain Penelope; I stitch
A crafty web of colored strings
While warriors die and Helen sings.

I am the patient one who sits
And clicks her needles as she knits.
Helen's hand is slender white
Above the warriors like a light.

I am proud Penelope who sews
And weeps while ever past me goes
Blown along the vacant air
Helen's streaming golden hair.

MARTHA WICKHAM

¶ A PAGAN'S PRAYER

O God, as children pray, I lift my voice in all simplicity.
I raise my head, my eyes; I lift my heart.
I need not, can not bow in prayer; so true—
So deep it asks no pose—is my humility.

O God, a Pagan born, I cannot talk to you with others
near.
You came to me alone; alone I pray.
I call no church my own, no robe divine.
My sermons live in life; I need no presbyter.

O God, I know no creed, no pious words of prayer,
And yet, count you my faith the less sincere?
The Book was made for others, not for me,
For words grown cold from thoughts long gone are bare.

O God, if I accept the truths of wise men other than
your Son—
And who shall say that they were not his kin?—
Can such a heart as yours call me untrue?
Can such a heart as yours have room for only one?

O God, if I be Pagan, grant to others who can name
their faith
A Pagan's tolerance of station, race and creed,
Religion that exceeds religion's name,
And peace that comes of life, that fears no death.

CARROLE BIRCHFIELD

¶ SORROWS OF WÖRTER

Yes, sticks and stones
May break my bones,
But 'tis the words that crush me.

A billion words
Like giddy birds
Diurnally ambush me.

Much of the sound
From tongues unbound
Were better not. I hush me.

JOHN BERRY

¶ DILEMMA

They look at life with eager eyes
These two whose love is young,
They seek amid the worldly wise
The way of joy unsung.

But never comes the answer clear,
Nor fortune smoothes their way.
Deep in their hearts there is no fear
To love, but to betray.

'Tis humbly, in the holy place,
They ask God's aid, in prayer;
It swiftly comes, the way of grace,
The courage to forbear.

FRANK BURNS

¶ PHRASES

From the Little Fugue in G Minor of Johann Sebastian Bach as Interpreted at the Vesper Hour.

The fabric is rich blue,
With gray interpolations,
Lithographs,
Patterns.

Vibrant ocean surf—
Drooping swallows' wings—
Austere evergreens—
Daggers' blades—
Stalks of bamboo—
Masts of a clipper ship—
The fabric is rich blue.

WILLARD STEPHENS

¶ SONNET

We have no part in these, the quiet spread
Of wild oat down the hill, the calm descent
Of live oak to the lake. The larva's head
Tearing the leaf, the parasite's intent
Find the warm foliage is indifferent.
Man cannot be so patient, having known
The steady dissolution of the days,
The cleavage of the body from the bone,
And has no wish to lie alone and raise
Cool eyes on nature while his pulse decays.
Gregariously he spreads upon the hill
His table, gazing at the scene until
He dares not leave off laughing lest he stare
On resignation come too soon to bear.

ANN STANFORD

¶ THE MOLE

Little one with velvet cloak,
Soft as eider, dark as smoke,
Worker, slave to fruitless toil,
Scavenger of the senseless soil,—
What are sun and stars to you,
Rover of buried avenue?

GORDON BISHOP

¶ THE QUAIL

Running
Across the road
On tiny feet, a prim
Duchess in a blue gown and a
Plumed hat.

ROBERT STORTZ

¶ L'HORLOGE

Dawn is a yellow spotted deer
Running swiftly through the trees;

Day is a buck on a rocky hill
Taking wind of a summer breeze;

Dusk is a simple trembling doe
Lying in the grey-green brush;

Night is a hungry mountain cat
Padding through the forest hush.

RENE SANFORD

¶ WHY ART THOU SORROW?

Why art thou sorrow and not joy to me,
Thou wolf insatiate, whose hungry tongue
Hast fired my quivering flanks with ecstasy,
Who huntest down my mind? Thy scent hast clung
About the desert growth where we have gone
Panting in frolic race and fierce pursuit,
About the water springs, where to were drawn
Both trembling antelope and snarling brute.
I in my fervor lash among the brush
Of my entangled memories, and prowl
Seeking thy footprints, through the twilight hush
Howling and listening for thine answering howl.
Let not the moon go down upon my cry.
Come from thy covert with a deep reply.

FRANCES A. SHIER

¶ TO CALIFORNIA

Your shores were hallowed by a saint's desire!
You, El Dorado, holy Serra trod,
And stooping, gently lifted up to God
The chalice poppy, cup of living fire,
Meet symbol of the love of ardent friar
Who sowed the seeds of faith upon your sod
And ceaselessly traversed its every rod
To fan that flame of faith still higher.
Ah, California, lovely golden land,
Your true wealth lies along the King's Highway!
A Spanish litany, a mission trail—
Those broken, purple-shadowed arches stand
A noble monument in this our day
To gallant men, who conquering, seemed to fail.

SISTER C. S. J. OF ORANGE

¶ MADONNA IN THE WOODS

Madonna stood in the pine woods
And her halo was golden bright;
At her feet a pool of water
Reflected the holy light.

The moon was blue and crystal,
And the night was warm and mild;
The wind bore lambkin bleatings
And the cry of a new-born Child.

RENE SANFORD

¶ PORTRAIT

Prosperity left it
Semi-residential—
Scattered houses;
Lots of lots,
Browsing in the sun.

On a stretch of sidewalk,
Weed-o'er-grown,
Hattie comes
In her coaster-wagon—
Push, push, push,
Up the unkempt sidewalk—
Push, push, push,
By the old lady's house.
And the old lady, on her
Sun-porch
Rocking, rocking,
Sees Hattie.
Hattie pushing, pushing
And the old lady watching.

ALBERT CLARK

¶ NIGHT MUSIC

I

O the sound of the wild wind sighing,
And the gentle pain within;
O the eve-mist settling over
All the city's fading din.

O the call of the fragrant pine trees!
And the yearning heart that leaps
At the twang in air of sea-salt
While the whole world fitfully sleeps.

'Tis the evensong of toiling
And the spirit's rest from care.
Night! Night! wilt thou bring relief now,
That the day might be more fair?

II

Stars! Stars! Sing me a song!
No one shall hear it,
Though I feel it within me more vibrant and strong
Than all trumpets and cymbals that sound
A glad fanfare of joy all around.
Yet no one shall hear it—
Stars! Stars! Sing me a song!

Moon! Moon! Shed thy dear beams!
Love must be lighted;
For each lover is wishing for shimmering dreams
That need touching by lunar magic
For the loves that are muted and tragic.
O love must be lighted!
Moon! Moon! Shed thy dear beams!

III

Desires that profane this night!
 Fret me no longer
 With this aching hunger,
This gnawing restlessness that yearns
 To satisfy itself in dreams
That soon shall haunt the morrow with their burns.

Along the moonlit turrets of lunacy
 I walk with ghosts of long-expired sighs;
And I know not what dream thou art, O night,
 For thou hast mothered a world of subtle lies.

O niger nox, O atrox nox,
 Thou blind and traitorous night!
O sweet-breathed night with the soft and fluent eyes,
 O wilt thou heal a blight?
The mournful mistress of a hundred moods—
Thou swarthy Negro, hateful symbol of hate,
Crush me not when thy form above me broods.
 At once thou art my fate,
 And then again the mate,
Of all the fancies a friendly love includes!

O warm and friendly night!
 Full in the blissfullness
 Of soft forgetfulness,
Let me lie in peace with you,
 Your honey and your balm impart
And let my dreams be but a happy few!

FRANCIS SANGUINETTI

¶ TREES ON A HILL

The trees, like bent old women,
Go stumbling, bow-backed, down the hill
One after another,
Their low-hung branches
Dustily brushing the ground
Like fringed shawls.

RUTH COMMAGERE

¶ SUNRISE

The red light sweeps over the heavens
Like a great fire dragon
Finding and consuming here and there
A star left over by the night.

RENÉE CRUM

¶ LINES IN AUTUMN

Spring
Is a phantom flute
Piping on these hills
The echo of a summons wildly sweet . . .
Now lost.

Autumn
Is a trumpet
Of crimson leaves and gold,
Of winds, and high skies brightly blue
With challenge.

KATHARINE CHASTAIN

¶ LINES IN MIDSUMMER

We,
Standing close on a hilltop,
Lifted our eyes in the velvet dark
To a hesitant cascade scoring the summer night
With falling stars.

KATHARINE CHASTAIN

¶ CALIFORNIA QUEST

Ask you where is California found?
Go then on the roads which long have wound
Through the litanied towns of Spanish tone;
See the silvered shores where the sea-winds moan,
Serried Missions crumbling, treasured sites,
Crisp old San Francisco's glistening height,
Valleys green and glinting arboreal gold,
Silent peaks—white with winter's cold.
Ask you where is California found?
Search long. Look well. Lift your eyes from
the ground!

FRANKLIN CULLEN

¶ WHILE DUSTING IN VARSİ LIBRARY

Old books and tomes in sheepskin bound,
And yellowing leaves with pungent, centuried must;
I wonder if in you is found
The sparkle of truth—undimmed by History's dust.

FRANKLIN CULLEN

¶ I REMEMBER

The golden glory
Of the Harp Room
At sunset,

The fog-filled valley
Like
A soft grey sea,

The hills
Looming like black velvet
Against a faded sky,

The blue blur
Of Catalina
On a dull day,

The fog
Darting across the garden
With swift ghost-fingers,

The silhouette
Of young acacias
Against a blue sea,

The silken swirl
Of weeds
On the fire break,

Glimpses
Of the delicate ivory
Of a dusty miller

I remember.

MARY CONDON

¶ MOTHER EARTH, HOLD MY BABY

Mother Earth, hold
My baby in your arms
Tenderly
As in mine she used to be,
Cozily in your arms, for me.

Sturdy Oak, stand by
Her in the dark
Assuringly
Till she's not afraid to be
So far away from me.

CONSTANCE CRANE

¶ RETRIBUTION

No covenant with peace is mine tonight.
Nor will there ever be, until the stabbing
Steel-blue coldness of your eyes recedes
Down the shaft of memory, dimmed to a puff
Of ashes.

No spoken doom has ever chilled a hope
Nor prefaced dragging anguish more profound
Than one last frozen glance exposing the dead
Child of old illusions long burnt out
And cruelly.

Your forgiveness or my wan penitence
Cannot raise old towers. I pray that you
Forget! My shadow is the look you gave;
Its livid mark I bear. I shall not forget
You cared.

CAROL DOROTHY

¶ COLLEGE DANCE

(Sonnet in dialogue)

Freshman girl:

“Are all boys here-about as dull as these?
And do they all dance so, with feet of lead?”

Senior girl:

“Yea, verily, my child, thus do they tread
The measured step, eschewing grace and ease!”

Freshman:

“And why does yonder yokel clutch and squeeze
His partner so, as if in mighty dread?”

Senior:

“’Tis done because he knows all hope is dead.
See how the maiden’s face does slowly freeze—
Contempt and pain are boldly written there.”

Freshman:

“Alas, that college dreams should fade away
Before such brutal truth! But why do you,
O sage, still tolerate this grim affair?”

Senior:

“’Tis not a senile urge for tardy play—
My thesis, *Human Habits*, lacks a clue.”

GRACE DICKEY

¶ SUMMER HORIZON

The hills
Are patient rows
Of camels, kneeling in
The shimmering turquoise courtyard of
The sky.

NANCY E. GARRETT

¶ MEDITATION

Of't in the quiet hours of night
When silence reigns supreme,
When all about is cool and wet,
And o'er the earth a canopy set
Where the countless stars then gleam,

I like to find a hidden way
And wander there, alone;
And ponder o'er the lovely things
That life to all humanity brings
In countless ways unknown.

ALICE COMPTON

¶ INSPIRATION

O world, how thou dost fling thy challenge bold
To deeds, not only thoughts exalted high,
The scampering scarlet leaves, the birds that fly
Black silhouettes against blue mountains cold,
The lacey trees that sway in sunset's gold,
The softly swirling snowflakes mutely vie
With music of the sleigh bells passing by,
The hour when first thy love thou didst unfold.
The rising, falling, vivid melody
Of great symphonic poems that are hurled
Across the magic waves, with meaning fraught.
It is most strange that men should hear and see
And yet not be inspired to help their world.
God, Grant to men the strength for deed, not thought!

JANET FOWLER

¶ QUEST

I am a shepherd lad
A stranger here—
And you are strange to me.
My sandaled feet are sand-burned
For I have travelled far
And climbed tall hills
And walked alone;
Your feet are snug
And smartly clad,
Not bruised and caked with dust,
For you are civilized,
And wise,
Not uncouth and lowly like my kind.
So I have come to worship—
And to learn.

I walk with you your city streets,
I see your shops
With glittering wares
And jostling throngs,
Your clerks with tired eyes.
I hear your little children say their prayers—
To Santa Claus.
A beggar crouches in the street
You shrink away
Or hurry with unseeing eyes
For he is old
And has no legs
And soon will die.
But you have friends
And you give gifts . . .

You hurry on and brush aside
The little child
With tear-starred eyes
Who looks up in your face.
You have no time to smile
Or touch with loving hands
The tousled curls
For you are program chairman—
And there's a ball—for benefit
A luncheon
And a tea.

Your church chimes ring
And soon soft light
Will sift through tinted glass
To show the world
You worship God
And thank Him for His Son.
You sit inside "on cushioned pews"
And sing a bit—
And listen some.

I try to understand,
I try
To use your twentieth century way
Of thanking God for Christ
His Gift of Love

Long years ago
My grandsires stood upon a windy hill . . .
Forgive my weakness
But I wish for one sweet moment
I could be upon a hill-top now—
Some hill-top where the night was still
And crisp
And cool

And clear.
Where windswept skies
Were bright with stars
And one star flamed with living fire.
I wish that I
Might lay my cheek
Against a fuzzy lamb
Hear restless stir of drowsy sheep,
Softly tinkling bells.
I wish that I
Might stand up straight and tall
And hear the angel song
Of "Peace—goodwill"
And follow with the star-shine on my face,
And kneel at last
Before a Manger Babe.

MARY DUTTON

¶ PRAYER

Teach me to love with that all healing love
That sees beyond despite and fear and pain,
Pride and the selfish eye, greedy of gain,
And seeing thus finds there the pure, tall life to love,
Eyes and hands that move to bless, alone to bless,
The mind reflecting good, knowing happiness.

Help me to find this year a more abundant youth,
Bearer of greater beauty, bearer of peace,
Filled less with strife and want, knowing release
From all unholy things, from that strange apathy
That dulls a mind alert, a loving deed.
Help me to tend a flower born of bright and holy seed.

ELIZABETH T. HARRINGTON

¶ A LOOKING GLASS

In Which I attempt to Apprehend the Obscure

What are you, Thing in the Looking Glass,
That would speak silent words
Of a non-existent language?—
And would with your wild, dark-light eyes
See more than is given men to see?
What are you, that you drop your mask
To me alone, and stare with cavernous hunger?
You are a gate, a bed, a cloud-path.

O web of diffident life!

I know my soul!

I know the beauty and the passion,

Mine is the fierce ugliness,

Mine the blackness and the hate—

White horror, steel and pus,

Wide-irised terror of the loneliness!

I have calm and I have wisdom.

I am a germ of isolated consciousness

Floating in infinite ecstasy and misery—

Here is truth! It sears the gentle veil of happiness.

Only the misery, only the ecstasy!

(Night and a grey gull flying.)

And which of us is the reflection,

O hunchback dwarf in search of the Holy Grail!

JOHN BERRY

¶ MAIDEN LOVE

Throughout the hours of life we live,

We love in laughter's play.

But by my side she ever stands

Madonna of my day.

RICHARD GRACE

¶ PRAYER OF THE WANDERER TO HIS MADONNA

I haven't prayed to you for all these years;
Nor, silent, knelt before your face divine;
Nor have I offered penance with my tears,
Nor burned one candle at your little shrine.

But I have loved your image in the mild,
Sweet ecstasy of dawn's own reverence,
And in the shy gaze of a little child
I knew your glance with all its innocence.

No anthem ever sweeter hymned your grace
Than one wild bird's song in a moonlit hour;
No altar ever softer framed your face
Than does the heart of every gentle flower.

I haven't prayed to you in all these years;
I did but echo what the faithful led.
My sins forgive, Madonna, with these tears;
How could I sweeter say what Nature said?

MARGARET FRAMES

¶ BAZAAR

Odoriferous fragrances scented the air
With jasmine and lilac and myrrh;
The perfumes of Egypt, Assyria, Greece,
The treasures of kingdoms that were.
Each fragrance was held in a carved crystal vial,
Or other containers as fine.
Above these aromas a placard of white
Read "Perfume sale, one-sixty-nine."

ELOISE HORNSTEIN

¶ THE DESERT

Dawn—

Gold rimmed mountains
Foretell the rising sun.
Purple night shadows
Linger in remote stretches
Of desert wastes.
Grotesque joshua trees
Guard the portals
Of the horizon.

Noon—

Pointed peaks of red lava
Reach toward the
Unclouded sky.
Patches of dusty cactus
On calid sands
Relieve the torrid glare.
Distant mirages mock
The thirsty voyager.

Evening—

Latticed clumps of sage
Trace delicate patterns
On cooling sands.
Somber shadows of dim ranges
Create fantastic images.
Sifted silver moonbeams
Diffuse everywhere a
Fairy-like radiance.

LORRAINE GIBSON

¶ ATHEIST

Never to know the still, sublime content
Of faith in some horizon past his sight;
Never to rest when twilight's banishment
Of day restores an esoteric night;
Never to stand and wait with folded hands,
Knowing the moment whispers to the years;
Never to feel the pulse of soft commands
That quell the dissonance of doubts and fears.

Always the beating fists upon a door
Of lead that opens only with a key;
Always the alien on some foreign shore
Who looks with wistful eyes upon the sea;
Always the secret yearning for a sign
That beauty can exist beyond the known;
Always the searching for an inner shrine
Where he might kneel and call a prayer his own.

If only he would take his cap and climb
To heights where earth and sky and water blend,
He might reach out to touch the tip of time
And smile to find he cannot feel the end.

ELAINE L. GOLDBERG

¶ GARDENS

Small gardens are enclosed by walls, but none can wall
the sky,
And none can hide the cheerful tree from those who
travel by;
And none can take the apple boughs and claim them for
his own,
For nature's beauties on the earth belong to God alone.

FRED KERN

¶ MUSIC

Please, Musician, play a tune—
Some throaty notes on your bassoon,
And let me dream;
Let think of London fogs,
Of narrow streets with many jogs,
And Pudding Lane, and highland bogs—
So let me dream.

Take your flute and wind me notes
As some old Phrygian, herding goats
On craggy hills
Might pipe a simple song to me—
Clear and sweet, in minor key,
An ageless tune to set me free
From fancied ills.

As you pluck your mandolin,
I watch a Spanish dance begin,
With half-closed eyes;
I see bright shawls and olive faces,
White mantillas made of laces,
Gory bull-fights, breathless races,
Turquoise skies.

Pound your drum with rhythmic beat;
I close my eyes and feel the heat
Of jungle lands,
Feel the savage, frenzied mood,
Tom-toms calling to the feud,
Dancing natives, blackly nude
On tropic sands.

Play each instrument you know
So I around the world may go;
Your music seems
A magic carpet made for me,
Just woven out of melody,
To take me over land and sea
Within my dreams.

HELEN LOUISE GRIGSBY

¶ HOKKU

Alone
beside a path
of bright pansy faces,
I knelt in prayer and there my faith
grew strong.

I wove
a dream of gold
last night from web-like threads
that fell from above in paths of
moonbeams.

Softly
as tinkling glass
upon a hardwood floor,
I heard the sharp shattering of
a heart.

MARGARET GRANT

¶ THE SEASONS IN CINQUAINS

MOON

A moon
Plays hide and seek
With silver clouds in fields
Of liquid blue, and daisies are
The stars.

MOTH

Night's wings
Have scattered with
The dust of stars the dark
Blue blossom of the sky, and flown
Away.

RAIN

The rain
Is bringing Night
In long grey strands of pearls,
Each darker than the last, from skies
Of lead.

SMOKE

The wind
Blows pungent smoke
In curling pale grey scarves
Against the velvet studded sky
Of Night.

NANCY E. GARRETT

¶ GYPSY MOTHER'S SONG

We roam the valleys
And tramp the hills,
Tim, Timmy and I,
And pick the cresses
Along the rills
Tim, Timmy and I.

We gather berries
And wreath our hair,
Tim, Timmy and I,
And skip a brooklet
And hum an air,
Tim, Timmy and I.

And sometimes Timmy
Rides piggy-back
On Papa Tim and me,
And scans the trailets
For late deer track;
A big-game hunter is he.

Cloud shadows
Play hide-and-seek
With Tim, Timmy and me,
But their queer patterns
Never pique
Tim, Timmy and me.

And light and free
We fling a song
Tim, Timmy and I
And hand in hand
We swing along
Tim, Timmy and I.

For God is good
And faith is strong
With Tim, Timmy and me.
And life is new
And dreams are young
With Tim, Timmy and me.

GENOVEVA SAAVEDRA HIDALGO

¶ SEA GULLS COMING HOME

High in the sky against the blue,
Wings of silver and pearl
That shine with glory of freedom
Gracefully glide and swirl,

Trailing the sunset banners bright
Of coral, gold and rose
From far horizons out at sea
That only a sea gull knows.

A wild discordant greeting
Is flung to rising tide,
And sharp is the pang of longing
The land-imprisoned hide.

Down to the warm sand's welcome,
Dipping thru lacy foam
While green waves ripple backward,—
Sea gulls are coming home.

LEONIE HUNTER

¶ SAINT PIERRE-MIQUELON

(Two small French islands off Newfoundland)

Ghostly sheets of grey fog
Roll over jagged rocks;
A piercing beam shoots from
The hoary lighthouse on Gallant Head.

Bearded seamen recite old tales
As they hobble through narrow streets;
Comely daughters of New Brittany
Greet the fishermen from the Banks.

Noisy wagons, pulled by Newfoundland dogs,
Rattle past rambling shops
As night's ultramarine blanket spreads
Over Saint Pierre, to mark another day.

BEN HAMILTON, JR.

¶ SONNET TO LOST SHELLS

I walked along the silver, shining shore
To look for colored shells of lovely hue.
Alas! I found them not, but I found you.
I could not find the shells, but found more.
It was a love I never knew before.
Your radiant face, your eyes like morning dew
Awoke desire, and fear, and hope I never knew.
That bit of truth, my heart could not ignore.
Today I walk alone along that strand
Still seeking pearly shells I cannot find.
But you my anguish cannot soothe or still,
For long ago you left, led by the hand
That snatches from this world all mortal kind.
So quietly I walk and wait His will.

PERSHING OLSON

¶ SONG FOR GOOD-BYE

We wandered down the mountain, we ran through
the rain.

We laughed until the passing people thought we were
insane.

(The sky was a cloudy flower on a windy stalk.)

We stepped on our reflections all along the shiny walk.

We gathered up the candy-tuft to make a wet bouquet.

We shaped a brazen little tune and sang it all the way.

(A handful of stars was caught down in the puckered
lake,

And there was so much loveliness we thought our hearts
would break.)

But in the light of morning nothing was the same.

I didn't speak to you, and you . . .

. . . no longer knew my name.

ROSEMARY HANNAN

¶ FANTASY

Cool, fresh night air,

Expectant hush, tall shadows of the specter trees

In feathery rows, as if some careless lady

Placed her plumed fan upright,

Lacing grotesque patterns on the gashed black earth.

The incandescent moon breathes on the sky

Its mellow fragrance.

All is still, hushed, as if some greater force said

"Hold."

The mortals see, and wonder at the world.

HELEN MARSHALL

¶ TO JAMES STEPHENS

Then, faith, the Leprecaun—'tis you,
A startled, wee-faced one, at that,
With naughty lights fair sparking from
Your eyes, your pointed ears back flat;
An ugly, knowing, elfin face
You have—and sure, 'tis quick you are,
For never let them start the chase,
But frightened you will leap behind
Bright tatters of the autumn leaves;
You chortle soundlessly, and wind
Is taken for your voice, the while
They seek you in the cold waste land,
And there you are, all wicked laughs,
In faery circle's light you stand.
He is not dead, the Leprecaun,
The whimsy-fashioned Irish Pan,
The merry one who dances with
The Gort na Cloca Mora clan;
He mocks us now, the impish thing—
Oh yes, I hid and saw him pass,
Soft tracing mystic patterns in
The green and gleaming dew-hung grass.

BARBARA HIRSHFELD

¶ AUTUMN TRIOLET

With foliage flaming in the sun—
The air of autumn sharp and crisp,
The task of winter is begun.
With foliage flaming in the sun,
And summer's scorching work is done.
From wood-fires blazing curls a wisp.
With foliage flaming in the sun—
The air of autumn sharp and crisp.

JEANNETTE JENNINGS

¶ WE JOURNEYED SIDE BY SIDE

We journeyed side by side
Upon a dim untrodden land,
The woman and myself marked a passage
on the sand.

And as we rode, I said to her
I'm going on alone
She looked at me and what I saw
Made me suppress a moan.

For in that look was sweet compassion
Not seen or known on earth
And in it too was not the fire that
Dances on the hearth.

It was the fire of all-consuming love
Known only by the few
Who feel the impulse not of self
But only you and you.

And so my body went its way
It never reached its goal.
The grieving woman that looked at me
Was my discarded soul.

MARY-EM HARDIE

¶ CHILD MUSING

Seems to me
Skyscrapers and towers
Have grown so tall
Heaven's got no space at all.
Heaven's lost its privacy,
Seems to me.

NORMAN MENNES

¶ THE COTTONWOOD

The most beautiful of things on earth to me
Is the sun shining on the windblown leaves
Of a cotton-wood in the spring.
I like to think that shiny bits of green
Are streaked with veins of purest silver,
And that the wind is the smith
Who fashions of it tiny bracelets
For the fairies who whisper to each other
As they sit on the silvered branches;
I like to think I hear them laugh with glee
As they bend to see themselves reflected
In the rushing stream below;
And I like to think that when the silversmith
Has finished with the leaves, some unknown alchemist
Turns them into gold and releases them to fly away
And down, in the last swirling dance of happy death.

RUTH KELBOURNE

¶ MEDUSA

The sea trips itself in hurry to escape her
Trees bend, arms flung upward to avoid her wrath
Fearsome, Medusa's head stares from the storm-rent sky.

Ragged clouds knit her great, dark brows
Lightning flashes from her baleful eyes
Wind-swept torrents writhe in her snaky hair.

The wind flees, shrieking in mad terror!

BETTY JANE MITCHELL

¶ BENARES (India)

Dark Mother Ganga slowly winds her way
Beside the bank, where tier on tier arise
Temples and mosques, hotels where rank supplies
The need of pilgrims who now bathe and pray,
Believing that the sacred stream will wash their sins
away.

The sun beats fiercely down upon the scene,
Yet may not pierce into the narrow street
Where lines of puny beggars stand and beat
Their bowls, or raise their leprous hands unclean,
To beg a price for food to nourish bodies sick and lean.

The naked holy man cross-legged stares,
Beneath his huge umbrella made of palm,
To silence bound; but muttering "Sita Ram,"
His holy aspiration thus declares—
To worship his own God, forgetting wine and women's
snares.

Along the ghats, the flesh-devouring fires
Flame 'round the bodies of the white-clad dead,
Hungriily licking up their last low bed.
The nauseating smoke sweeps from the pyres;
Sated with human flesh, soon on the air expires.

The temple gongs clang out the worship hour;
The hideous idols gaze in laughing hate
At pilgrims striving to escape their fate.
High overhead the temple gateways tower;
The weird, wild music mingles with the scent of jasmine
flower.

MARY M. KNEELAND

¶ ON SLEEP

Beyond the colored blights of consciousness,
Bound by a thickened blackness of no sight,
Where strange thought-imps are wakened into flight
Around my pillow, here I hope to dress
My hopes, once more, into stateliness,
To cope with some mad morrow's mental flight;
To toy with the morning's hopeful light
When long, dark hours have sunk to thoughtlessness.

Sleep! Take this body and these outstretched limbs—
These warm, foul, lips; this aching, clustered brain—
This lone and tired heart—sweet interims
Of timeless minutes, take with you this pain . . .
. . . Cool, placid syllables of half-heard hymns . . .
Take all! heart, flesh and softly flowing vein.

BERNARD IDE

¶ PLEA FOR A FLOWER

O stay the hand that plucks the bush's blush.
No chains could hold its beauty to a vase.
That bud that bloomed with dawn's first flush
To such a brilliant paragon of grace.
Its dulcet velvet lured; the bees caressed
And carried life through winter's brown to spring.
That such a small and shriveled seed should wrest
These colors out of earth; such beauty bring.
How many seeds within that flower's bowl
Would you destroy? How many future blooms
To satisfy a whim? Destroy the whole
That you may have some color in your rooms?
O stay the hand that would destroy the flower
Whose fragrant beauty lasts but one brief hour.

WILLIAM NYE

¶ LAMENT FOR THE MACHINE AGE

Across the sunset's gold, do you see
That monument to man?
Or girding all the bay's bright glee,
That monster, span on span?

A thousands storms may come and go,
But steel, they say, shan't fall.
Yea, hark! what land the four winds blow,
Machine-might conquers all.

Yet, look, proud man, your world about:
Unhappiness is *king!*
Are there yet two that may be found
To share life's *precious* thing?

The God of love no longer dear
Our world has flung aside.
When will they know His voice to hear,
That happiness abide?

JOHN MC ELROY

¶ A WRITER'S THOUGHT

Books and books and books—
All upon a shelf;
I wish I knew why I,
That is, in truth, myself,
Would want to put another book
Upon that cluttered shelf—

ANNABELLE JOSSMAN

¶ KEEN TO THE COILING SEASON'S TURN I GREW

Jetson flung out the vortex of event,
I lay beside the bank of time and saw
Year follow lazy swirling year—no rent
To mar their mimicry—flow without flaw.
Keen to the coiling season's turn I grew,
Nursed corn and crept on insects, swift and sly,
Gave stolen bones to stray dogs that I knew,
And watched Orion stalk the winter sky.
Time took slow form to one at once aloof
And in the heart of it. It was a thing
Of ebb and flow, a phoenix, for the proof
Lay near in death and resurrection of each spring.
Yet watching young corn's annual skyward race,
I chafed, somewhat, at my own season's pace.

GUY NUNN

¶ FANTASY

We'll take a journey through the night,
To yonder star we'll stray,
Through silver clouds and mad moonbeams.
Perhaps we'll go to stay.

So take my hand and hold on tight,
Who cares what brings the day?
As long as it is you and I.
Come, let's be on our way.

Up to the heights of myriads
Through comets' tails that spray
Like golden rain on thistle-down.
Oh, what a place to play.

We'll visit the Lion in his den
Or call on Orion brave.
We'll feed the Bear on lollypops,
If we can find his cave.

We'll drink sweet mist from the dipper's rim,
And when we've had our fill,
We'll travel back to earth again.
Come, you be Jack, I Jill.

OLA ORRELL

¶ TO DESCARTES

You are another, yes, another one,
Who freshly struck with neat coincidence
Of digits, forms and spaces, has begun,
With swagger and a schoolboy confidence,
The soul's dissection.

Oh keep the slide rule out of metaphysics!
Your theorems keep to angles and the line.
The mind's no prey for hungry analytics.
Empiricism never can untwine
The soul's perfection.

GUY NUNN

¶ DISARMAMENT

Canyon
Corridors stand
Immutable, where
Ringing silence
Rends the
Breathless air.

WILLIAM D. MCALLISTER

¶ THAT'S DIFFERENT

So you're her brother?
I've heard so much about you
And now at last I meet you.
How does it feel
To be back in the small home town
After four years in the city?
Is it true you're now a doctor,
Ready to start on your own?
It must be grand
To be ready to enter life
With a purpose and goal in view.
I've often wondered how you would look,
But I never expected anything like this.
You're positively handsome.
Have you seen the town
Since you've been back?
Oh, no, not in the daytime.
I mean the nightlife—
We have that now.
What's that?—Your wife doesn't like crowds?
Your *wife*? I didn't know—
Well, that is—you mean you're *married*?
Why, she didn't tell me that!
But I'm glad I met you;
I always said any brother of hers
Is a friend of mine.
I'll be seeing you.

ROSALIND ODELL

¶ FIRE ENGINES

Through the city's noise arise
Fire sirens' eerie cries
And city walls and streets of stone
Are sudden jungle grown.
Along its trails the engines bay
Like prehistoric beasts of prey.
Streetcars in their streams of steel
With protesting shriek and squeal
Pause like hippopotami
To let the raging engines by.
Buses halt like elephants
Which trumpet, but dare not advance.
Stopping short at corners, trucks
Paw and stamp like angry bucks;
While automobiles, smaller deer,
Tremble side by side in fear.
Pedestrians scramble to the curb
And chatter like a monkey horde.

From the flame feast back they stalk,
Their swiftness now a pompous walk,
Disdaining lesser cars that dare
Escort them, though in manner ware.
Like purring tiger cats, their deep
Contented rumble shakes the street.

HARBISON PARKER

¶ WHAT CAN A POEM DO NOW?

(*“Under the sun two things at least are true,
Nothing ever is the same—and nothing’s new”—
Chas. Recht*)

What can a poem do now but sift the ashes;
What can a poem recall but pain asleep
in the heart’s dead song?

What is there left to whisper of a love
unmeasured in a broken sky,
To indicate that flight went east-west separate
over the trail of little things,
To say instead we might have soared together
to the lonely afterwhile
Content to weave our modest pattern there
in some beautiful double way,
Lifting each other over falling stones with no more
effort than two sparrows pausing in the sun.

What can a poem do now but stir an empty dream?
What can a poem reflect but shadows on the wall?
And love is a bitter afterthought until
the last embers of the mind are cold.

Where shall I seek today another song to share
sincere enough to brave this naked light,
eager as breakers to clasp the shore?
What can a poem do now to bridge the if-time space
of the mind’s desire
with the world’s grim touch?

WILLIAM PETERSEN

¶ THE SALT AND THE SEA

I am alone, as I sit here down by the sea,
Except for the millions of stars,
Whose councils have led me to many far shores.
Once, long ago, I answered the challenge of the open sea.
The moon captained my ship through spiritual and
earthly seas.
She sailed the lonely ocean, and breasted the slashing
wave.
Dancing the mad rhythm of the stormy sea,
She beat out a tempo too fast for me.
I did not heed, nor wished to see the warning lights of
shore,
For I was drunk in the smell of the salt,
The romance, and the glamor of the sea.
Alone, a castaway, I sit down by the sea.
Shipwrecked on its rocky shore.
I sit and watch each ship sail by.
Will she, too, dance to that mad rhythm that sails my
ships no more?
Below me, the surf continues to roar,
Swishing and swirling, calling me.
I am coming, why?
Because I know that I am at the mercy
Of the salt and the sea.

LOLA M. PAYNE

¶ ALMA MATER

I am leaving thee tonight
Oh home of friendship,
Knowledge, kindness.
To be borne thus away
By circumstance
Is but an act of time.
I leave thee now, to seek
New plains for time to bury.
Behind I see warmth, life,
Sparkle, happiness, and love;
Before me I see utter blankness.
The past shall turn from
An object to a tool itself,
And I must seek
New materials to mold
With that tool
Of the past that is mine.
I am leaving thee tonight
But I am thy product;
So will all my future life
Be part of thee.

LYDIANE VERMEULEN

¶ SOUND AT NIGHT

It is the wind that calls,
Crying down the night;
Swift against the walls,
Softly singing fright.
Whispered at the doors
The word of bending trees
And the rumor of the moors.

FRANKLIN PATTERSON

¶ TO A MAGNOLIA

Pale, delicate flower
Perched like a butterfly
On the strong branch
Of the sturdy mother tree,
You are like some sweet spirit,
Trying to remain unspoiled
In a cruel world of reality.

May you be safe in your sheltered place;
May those who see you
Be not overcome by your beauty,
So that they spoil your loveliness
With eager, clumsy fingers.

ELIZABETH ROBINSON

¶ FLIGHT

I will go up to the hilltops,
Away from the tumult I'll flee,
And there I'll shake down the shackles
That bar me from Infinity!

I'll lay bare the wounds of my soul,
And probe the proud flesh here and there
With forceps forged from a spear of grass
And soothe with an unguent of air!

MARYE PAYLOR

¶ THE MAKING OF SIAPO

Tap . . . Tap . . . Tap . . .

Sina is making *siapo* cloth;
She sits in the shade of a mango tree
And pounds with her mallet constantly:
Tap . . . Tap . . . Tap . . .

She stripped white bark from the mulberry branch
And wet it with water, then pasted it flat
On a board; with a clam shell she scraped it down smooth
And then rolled it up into strips that were fat.

Tap . . . Tap . . . Tap . . .

She's pounding them steadily, one at a time;
From inches they're widening slowly to feet
And becoming like beautiful gossamer weave,
Nearer a *lava* at every dull beat.

She'll join them together—the pounded out strips—
And paint on a vivid design by degrees
With black from the candlenut, turmeric gold,
And red from the seed of the sandalwood trees.

Tap . . . Tap . . . Tap . . .

Sina is making *siapo* cloth;
She sits in the shade of a mango tree
And pounds with her mallet constantly:
Tap . . . Tap . . . Tap . . .

JOHN READE

¶ COWS

The last long rays of sun
Glance off the tawny hides of kine
And yield themselves to twilight.
A steady line of cows
Passes slowly along the path
Trampled to hardness through years,
Along the rock-strewn, green-edged path
Winding its gradual way towards home.
For years the cattle cross the wide-flung valley
Swiping a luscious clump of grass at intervals,
Drinking the waters of the rocky creek
With lusty swallows.
They follow along the timberland
Scratching their backs in the thorny thicket,
Switching their tails at persistent flies,
Munching the tempting leaves of low-bent oak
Contentedly.
The lowing herd curves slowly
And reaches the hilltop clearing,
Follows the barbed wire fence
Through the open gate into the barnyard.
Cows!
Long slow lines of cows
Swaying their gentle heads
With steady pace,
Trailing with patient tread
The beaten paths of years.

JOSEPH LANGLAND

¶ CAT

Little furry friend

You gently press your head
Against my cheek

Content, in vibrant purrs
Of love to speak.

You pat my pencil as I write
And murmur in my ear

What only I, in all the world,
Must hear.

We have our language, just we two,
The verbs are gentle throaty cries

And nouns full glances
From slant yellow eyes.

THELMA STARK RICH

¶ DEFEAT

They'd played their best.

They'd hoped to win.

But all in vain I guess.

Defeat had hovered o'er the field.

Midst silence they were getting dressed.

The treasured trophy gone like that!

'Twill rest in halls of rival schools.

Dejected, tired, forlorn, they sat—.

Defeat was master of the rules.

DICK LITTLEJOHN

¶ ODE TO GREY HAIRS

Grey hairs, life's coronet to reverence,
Are beautiful to see around your face.
Night's forsaken
They show so much of tenderness;
They plant so much of wisdom
In the furrowed lines upon your brow;
They hold so much of love, of joy, and sorrow
In their silver strands.
They speak of patience mellowed with the years,
Of wisdom filled with smiles and bitter tears,
Of courage growing with your age,
And all those many things that one must know
To pass through years
And still be lovely in a natural way.
When I am old, oh life, give me grey hairs!

JOSEPH LANGLAND

¶ MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS

A tall, white candle flickers in the night
The crucifix grotesque, distorted
A figure draped in agony
A white mask painted with black terror-filled eyes
A shadowed, pleading mouth
Soft hands clutching a heavy rosary.
The measured tread of sentries
Moonlight—pale and ghastly
A hideous structure outlined in granite shadow below
"Elizabeth, you cannot betray me!"
"Bothwell—the pipes?"
"No—only the wind in the trees."
A short, worn candle sputters in the dawn.

JEANNE LAURENDEAU

¶ PAPER BLOSSOMS IN THE
SNOW

That was her place. That windy
Street-corner where she stood
Ankle-deep in snow.
Her shabby, hooded-cloak, worn
Smooth and thin by park benches.
Fitful gusts of wind
Revealed a pain-pinched face
Too old for any child to have.
Her hands, blue—bare, sheltered
Paper blossoms from the wind.
Yesterday she left her corner early
With tears frozen on her cheeks.
The paper blossoms lay forgotten
In the snow.
Today—she did not come.

MARGARET RAU

¶ FAITH

Oh, God of glory and of might.

Lord of Eternal Day.

We cannot see Thy Holy Light,

Here on our devious way.

And still, Thy Love lives as of yore,

As strong and true for man,

Although the dark mist of this shore,

Obscures Thy Noble Plan.

Here on this path so dark and steep,

Sharp thorns bestrew the way,

While in the shadows serpents creep—

Our sins of yesterday.

But when we lift our eyes, Dear Lord,

Up to the vaulted skies,

We sight a realm of sweet accord—

Thy Work and Thy Device.

MARIA J. RODERIC

